

Good morning,

I am writing in support of Bill 5283.

My son is a sophomore at Rockville High School in the ASTE program. Through this program he has learned invaluable life and employment skills. Colin has learned about trade skills that he will use in any future endeavor. The students in our ASTE program are learning how to create business, care for the natural world, and to make and sustain food sources. In addition to this they are also learning to become leaders, advocates, and self-starters. These skills are irreplaceable.

My son has always had a great love for animals, science and non-fiction books. In elementary school he often found himself uninterested, finishing his traditional school very quickly, and sometimes even found time to make mischief. Colin was a kid who belonged in the streams and forests- exploring, hypothesizing and becoming filled with wonder at the natural world. Sadly, a program such as this did not exist for him prior to high school. We knew from a very young age that the Vo-Ag program at RHS would be a great fit for him. Here he has the opportunity to engage with and explore the world that has fascinated him since birth. He is learning academic skills while also being engaged in very meaningful ways. Colin will no doubt go on to do great things with his life, and the ASTE program has been pivotal in his educational experience.

Please consider fully funding the ASTE programs and increasing the availability of programs that teach real world skills, academic skills, inspire confidence, leadership, and promote trades which are vital to our economy and survival.

Thank you,  
Sherry Yarusewicz